

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 4-6 and 14-17 are pending in this application, with Claims 4, 14 and 17 being independent.

Claims 4, 14, and 17 have been amended. Applicant submits that support for the amendments can be found in the original disclosure at least, for example, at page 7, lines 10-16. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Claims 4-6 and 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,711,677 (Wiegley) in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0097323 (Lapstun et al.).

In response, while not conceding the propriety of this rejection, independent Claims 4, 14, and 17 have been amended. Applicant submits that as amended, these claims are allowable for the following reasons.

Independent Claim 4 relates to an image data recording device, comprising common key generating means for generating a common key based on a print ID transferred from an image data processing device, management means for managing the common key generated by the common key generating means and the print ID transferred from the image data processing device in pairs, common key issue means for transmitting the common key generated by the common key generating means to the image data processing device, common key obtaining means for obtaining the common key corresponding to the print ID from the management means when the print ID and print control data are transmitted from the image data processing device, analyzing means for

extracting encrypted print image data by analyzing a command of the print control data using the common key obtained by the common key obtaining means, decryption means for decrypting the encrypted print image data extracted by the analyzing means using a key corresponding to the print ID, and print means for recording the print image data decrypted by the decryption means on a recording medium.

Claim 4 has been amended to recite that the print image data is data encrypted in the image data processing device by using the common key. As a result, high-security image data encryption/transmission for each print ID can be obtained.

In contrast, the citations to Wiegley and Lapstun et al. are not understood to disclose or suggest at least that print image data (which is extracted by analyzing a command of the print control data using the common key obtained by the common key obtaining means, decrypted using a key corresponding to the print ID, and recorded on a recording medium) is data encrypted in the image data processing device by using the common key, as recited by amended Claim 4. Rather, the patent to Wiegley is understood to merely show that by using the session key transmitted from the printer 10, the session key is encrypted in the computer (column 4, lines 30, 31 and 53-55). And the Lapstun et al. publication is understood to merely disclose that a public key is used for a digital signature (paragraphs [0363] to [0369]).

Since MPEP § 2142 requires the cited art to disclose or suggest *all* the claimed features to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, and since the citations to Wiegley and Lapstun et al. are not understood to disclose or suggest at least one feature of amended Claim 4, Applicant submits that the Patent Office has not yet established a *prima facie* case of obviousness against amended Claim 4.

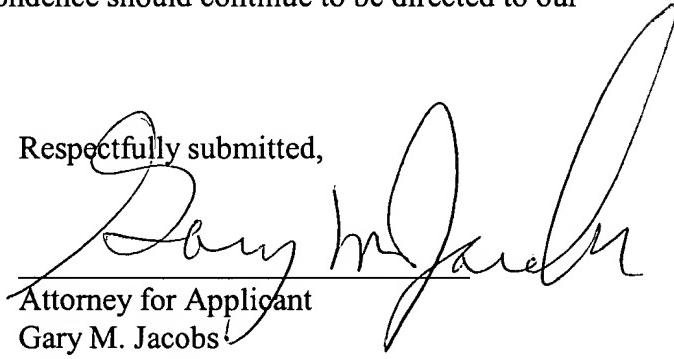
For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the outstanding rejection of Claim 4 over the citations to Wiegley and Lapstun et al. be withdrawn. And since independent Claims 14 and 17 have been amended to recite similar features, Applicant also respectfully requests that the outstanding rejection of these claims be withdrawn for similar reasons.

The dependent claims are allowable for the reasons given for the independent claims and because they recite additional features that are patentable in their own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully solicited.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the claims are now in allowable form. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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